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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Paul BURT et al.

Group Art Unit: 1725

Application No.: 10/519,359

Examiner: G. EVANS

Filed: December 28, 2004

Docket No.: 122241

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR LASER WELDING

APPLICANTS' SEPARATE RECORD OF PERSONAL INTERVIEW

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Evans in the May 9, 2006 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The previous Office Action rejected claims 29, 30, 32, 33, 36, 38-43, 47, and 48 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over JP 8-238587 to Soga et al. (hereafter "Soga") and rejected claims 31 and 46 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Soga in view of DE 3,931,401 to Gnann. Applicants filed a subsequent Amendment amending claims 29 and 47.

During the interview, Applicants' representative stated that claims 29 and 47, as currently amended, are, as a first point, distinguishable over Soga and Gnann as the prior art does not disclose supplying gas in the welding direction which impinges the workpiece. Examiner Evans argued that Soga discloses side nozzles 2 which are moveable in 3 dimensions and rotatable about the welding head (paragraphs 0003 and 0004), allegedly meeting the feature of supplying gas in the welding direction. Applicants' representative

argued that as shown in Figure 7, side nozzles 2 are mounted so as to swivel in the plane perpendicular to the welding direction, and fixedly connected to head 1 by table 4 (allowing for vertical movement) and table 5 (allowing for horizontal movement in the plane perpendicular to the welding direction). Thus, Applicants believe the rotation stated in the text of Soga (paragraphs 0003 and 0004) relates to the swiveling capability shown in Figure 7. Further, Applicants' representative argued there is no structure evident in Figure 7 which would allow horizontal rotation about the welding head. Thus, Soga cannot disclose supplying gas in the welding direction which impinges the workpiece.

Applicants' representative stated, as a second point, that Soga does not teach gas extraction means diametrically opposed to the gas supply means and that Gnann does not cure this deficiency. The gas extraction tube of Gnann is located above the welding site and is positioned to remove gas which has not impinged the workpiece.

Applicants' representative stated, as a third point, that Soga and Gnann do not appear to teach a cover slide which acts to focus the laser beam. Examiner Evans stated he would perform an updated search and would consult with other Examiners and will reconsider the art in light of the arguments.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:JHB/sxb

Date: May 10, 2006
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